

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY 7 JULY 2002

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications Unit of the South African Radio League and is responsible for providing emergency communication in times of distress or national disasters to local and regional authorities, when requested to do so.

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IN THE BULLETIN TODAY

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HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Sunday morning kicks off with Hamnet KZN at 07H15 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.070Mhz by Wally ZS5WP.

Followed with the national Bulletin on 10,130Mhz in the 30M band with a relay on 7.070Mhz by Martin ZS6MSG. In Gauteng, 145,700Mhz is also used for a local transmission. The time is 17h00 local.

Next we have Gauteng North. Their bulletin is read on Tuesdays at 20:30 local time to accommodate those who are in church on a Sunday evening.

The frequencies are 145,725MHz and either on 7,070MHz in the 40M band or 3,695MHz in the 80M band.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Last but not least is Hamnet Western Cape Province with a bulletin on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 3,674MHz relayed by Matt ZS1MJJ in the 80M band and on their local repeaters, 145:625Mhz, 145:700Mhz, 145:750Mhz and various other links.

Whatever you missed please access the S.A.R.L. Website under the heading "Hamnet News - regularly updated", for the latest news or if you are on Packet, it will have been sent to you thanks to Rudie ZS6DX.

The Hamnet section of the S.A.R.L. website is now being updated whenever new information becomes available. Please make use of this slot to get yourself informed of what is happening in your area or around the world.

Should an item of general information/interest need to be sent out, I have now created a single address in Windows Outlook, for a message to be sent out covering all HAMNET members who have e-mail addresses. It is now very important to keep me informed of any changed e-mail address.

DATES TO DIARISE

Schools reopen across the country from Tuesday July 16th for Gauteng, Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga, North West Province and the Free State. On Monday 22nd July for schools in KZN, Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape.

We do not anticipate large volumes of traffic on our roads, but it will be appreciated if we could monitor the emergency frequencies, especially during the day.

Earth Summit meeting in Sandton

This international Conference will run from the 26th of August to the 4th of September in the Sandton area.

Hamnet have been approached to assist with alternative and/or emergency communication during this period. It will entail us establishing a station at a yet to be announced operational centre which will be manned during this conference period.

We are asking all HAMNET members in the greater Johannesburg, Pretoria and Vaal Triangle area to prepare themselves for a stint of duty in the ops room or from your QTH during this conference period.

I have been asked to attend a joint Civil Protection, SANDF and SAPS meeting in Alberton this coming Tuesday morning. More information will be made available as information of our involvement becomes clearer.

From what we can gather, a multitude of International guests will be attending this conference and communication is of critical importance. The Thursday morning Citizen newspaper showed a shot of the huge tent being erected for the duration of the conference.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

The rescue operation the southern Antarctic region, went almost unnoticed apart from the occasional mention over the news or the odd photo in some newspapers.

This operation has now been successfully completed, and the Agulhas is on her way back to Cape Town.

All the 89 scientists aboard the ship were successfully transferred from the Magdalena Oldendorff by the two Oryx helicopters. Supplies were also taken aboard the Magdalena Oldendorff for the remaining crew who will stay on board until an Argentinean icebreaker reaches her to assist in freeing her from the pack ice.

Temperatures in that area were on average -15c to -25c and the ice pack was approx. 25cm thick. This, plus the fact that water was constantly freezing up around the Agulhas, prevented her from getting any closer to the Magdalena, but the operation was a great success.

We congratulate Captain Kevin Tate of the Agulhas and the crew for a job well done.

Talking about the cold, the winter is still very much with us, and the cold fronts are far from finished. There are still many snowfall possibilities on the higher mountain ranges and we should keep a watch on the weather for at least the next 3 months until end September. Remember, it snowed in Johannesburg on the 10th of September some 20 odd years ago.

Another word of warning. There is a new ploy to hijack your vehicle. The scenario is a person standing next to the road beside what looks like an animal that has been struck by a car.

You being the caring person and wanting to assist, slows down and offers assistance. At that point the accomplices then pounce on you from behind bushes and hijack your vehicle.

We have had the pregnant woman next to the road as yet another ploy to play on your sentiment. On stopping, the same thing happens and you are relieved of your vehicle.

Please be very careful and on your toes should you come across any of the 2 earlier mentioned scenes. They could be a ploy to rob you of your vehicle.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS AND EMERGENCIES

Still uppermost on the emergency lists are the floods in south Russia, the vast forest fires that ravaged Arizona and the earth quake victims in Iran.

Firstly, the Arizona forest fires; These fires are now to a certain extent under control and many ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Services) units have stepped down.

There are still enough amateur radio operators to maintain communication as and when needed. Pres. Bush has declared parts of the state a federal disaster area as the combined Rodeo-Chediski fire destroyed more than 351,000 acres of Arizona pine forest, upwards of 400 homes and business and more than 30,000 residents have had to be evacuated.

In Southern Russia however, the Russian Red Cross operation has to cope with bringing relief to more than 3000 people left homeless by these devastating floods, which hit the northern Caucasus and southern Russia area. Items like blankets, soap, shampoo, toothpaste and washing powder were on top of the emergency list.

In total, this disaster has left approx. 77 people dead and 200,000 homeless. The water destroyed more than 5000 houses and damaged more than 84,000 others in nine regions.

This specific region of Russia is known as Russia's "granary". The water has washed away not only the crops, but also layers of fertile soil as well. The result is, there will be no harvest this year.

Finally, the Iran earthquake. In short, 53 villages in Qazvin destroyed. Destruction rate varies from 50 - 100%. 11 Villages in Hamadan destroyed, destruction rate 10 - 100% and 4 villages as well as the city of Khodabande in Zanzan destroyed. Destruction rate 20 - 85%. 20 Villages are still without water.

The amount of people and vehicles involved in this rescue operation is enormous, to say the least. More than 30,000 blankets 12,700 relief tents, 2360 lanterns and 120,000 items of various canned food and non food items have been distributed.

More than 25,000 homeless people are being provided with alternative shelter and accommodation.

To crown it all, herewith a short list of other countries around the world who are, or have been subject to some sort of emergency during the last few weeks; Micronesia: Tropical Storm Chata'an - Jul 2002 - this is breaking news!! El Salvador: An outbreak of Dengue Fever. This is a very serious Tropical disease which hit the area in June. Yugoslavia: Floods in June. Honduras: Excessively high rainfall in June. Floods in China - in June. Floods in Ghana - also in June - and so the list goes on.

Finally, to the north of our borders, there is an unfolding crisis of hunger, failing crops and malnutrition in a large number of African countries. We will just have to wait and see how this tragedy develops.

In closing, there are so many items of information available either on the Internet or via articles and magazines sent to me by either council members, members of Hamnet or what we hear and see on T.V. My thanks to those who submitted information.

Again, lets just be grateful that we, here in South Africa, are not subjected to all the daily emergencies that unfold in so many parts of the world, almost on a daily basis. Keep monitoring, be prepared, and thank you for being a member of HAMNET. Bulletin ends.